

HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH ARMY  
G-2 STRATEGIC SERVICES SECTION  
APO 758 US ARMY

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28 January 1945

SUBJECT : Leg-bag accident on MIMI Operation  
TO : MR. George Pratt

1. On January 21, an attempt was made to fly the operation Mimi. All details having been ironed out, the operational plane took off from Lyon at 2130 hours and headed for the target. At the ready point just before reaching the target, the man who was to jump with the leg-bag was told to take his position in the hole. According to his story as well as that of his collaborator on the mission, he was not given any assistance whatsoever in this complicated movement. As a result the leg-bag became disengaged from the agent's leg and fell out - being held back only by the static line attached to the agent's harness chest strap - almost dragging him out of the plane by force. Finally the bag was cut away, but only after having ripped a jagged gash in the hole. The operation was forced to return unsuccessful.

2. From as complete a study as possible under the circumstances, made by Sgt. Mantooth, the two agents (who were the only eyewitnesses), and myself, we have decided that one of the following could have been the cause of the accident:

- a) That the tie pins were too loose and did not offer enough pull resistance.
- b) That the pull cord was so placed that in attempting to get into the hole without any help it was fouled either under the jumper's hand or under his thigh or buttocks.
- c) That the rip cord was too short and when the agent leaned back to take up his position in the hole, his movement pulled the leg strap release pins.
- d) That the agent in a state of nervous tension pulled the cord without realizing it.

The last possibility is not very probable because both agents say that at no time was the cord held in the jumper's hand.

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3. In view of the above facts and in order to prevent further occurrences of this nature, it is suggested that a concentrated attempt be made to secure permission from the Air Corps for Sgt. Mantooth to accompany as an assistant despatcher any operation which includes a leg-bag setup. This would also help immensely from a psychological standpoint, as the agent would feel much more confident in the presence of the man who had trained him in the use of the equipment; and naturally the personal touch at that critical moment may be the difference between a successful operation and a failure, or even a fatal accident. It is almost impossible for the despatcher to both handle the complicated routine necessary before a jump with leg-bag and control the individual who is at that moment at the height of nervous strain and who will in any case forget all he has learned in training. The presence of Sgt. Mantooth would enable him to check in detail the leg-bag equipment, and help the jumper to assume his position in the hole; thereby insuring against repetition of the accident reported in paragraph one.

Henry B. HYDE  
HQ 7th Army, G-2, SSS

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